

1 [Resolution Declaring Public Health Crisis on Drug Overdoses and Drug Use]

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3 **Resolution declaring a public health crisis on drug overdoses and drug use and urging**
4 **the Department of Public Health to present a comprehensive plan on how to address**
5 **this crisis.**

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7 WHEREAS, 70,237 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States in 2017; and

8 WHEREAS, Drug overdoses in San Francisco has claimed the lives of 259 people in
9 2018; and

10 WHEREAS, Fentanyl, a synthetic painkiller is up to 100 times more potent than
11 morphine and has surpassed prescription pills and heroin as the leading cause of opioid
12 overdose deaths in the city; and

13 WHEREAS, Until recently Fentanyl was mainly concentrated in the East Coast and did
14 not take the lives of Californians because it was used in such low levels that public health
15 officials could not trace it as the cause of death in overdoses; and

16 WHEREAS, In San Francisco in 2015, multiple overdose deaths were attributed to one
17 batch of white powder that users hadn't known contained fentanyl; and

18 WHEREAS, In 2016, multiple deaths in San Francisco were attributed to a single
19 supply of Xanax tablets that contained fentanyl. That same year higher amounts of fentanyl
20 was found in crack cocaine and methamphetamine; and

21 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Department of Public Health ("DPH") released data
22 showing that 89 people died of fentanyl overdoses in 2018--a 300% increase from 2016; and

23 WHEREAS, The same DPH report also found that 39 people overdosed on fentanyl
24 within the first quarter of 2019 alone, putting 2019 on track to surpass even last year's
25 numbers; and

1 WHEREAS According to a 2015 report on overdoses published by DPH, overdose
2 related deaths were clustered largely within the Tenderloin/Civic Center (32.5 %) and South of
3 Market (12.4 %) neighborhoods, both of which have a high proportion of residents living in
4 poverty, single room occupancy hotels, and opioid-related drug arrests; and

5 WHEREAS, 44.9 % of opioid-related deaths occurred in these two neighborhoods
6 while the remaining deaths were spread throughout the city, with each neighborhood
7 recording at least one opioid overdose death; and

8 WHEREAS, Methamphetamine use, and associated morbidity and mortality, has been
9 on the rise in San Francisco; and

10 WHEREAS, From 2011 to 2016, emergency room visits related to methamphetamine
11 use increased by 600%, and hospital admissions rose by 400%; and

12 WHEREAS, According to data from Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and
13 Trauma Center's (ZSFG) of the 7,000 psychiatric emergency visits in 2018, nearly half were
14 individuals who were under the influence of methamphetamine; and

15 WHEREAS, Substance use disorder treatment admissions for methamphetamine have
16 been increasing, with methamphetamine accounting for 19% of total admissions (third behind
17 heroin and alcohol); and

18 WHEREAS, Overdose deaths involving methamphetamine have also been increasing,
19 with 87 overdose deaths involving methamphetamine in 2017; and

20 WHEREAS, Methamphetamine use is highly prevalent among people experiencing
21 homelessness, with more than 50% of new clients for homeless services reporting
22 methamphetamine use in 2015; and

23 WHEREAS, When a treatment bed is not available when someone is ready for care,
24 the opportunity for engagement in treatment options is often lost; and

1 WHEREAS, In addition, if a stabilization bed is not available post-treatment, the
2 benefits of treatment can decrease; and

3 WHEREAS, A recent study of our current substance use treatment and post-treatment
4 options revealed that there is a demand for 1) mental health and co-occurring (mental health
5 and substance use) residential treatment beds; 2) medical detox beds, including more flexible
6 options for length of stay; 3) shorter-stay substance abuse treatment beds (offering 3, 5, or 7-
7 day options); 4) extended observation beds for people leaving psychiatric emergency
8 services; and

9 RESOLVED, That our City is currently suffering from a public health crisis caused by
10 rampant substance use and overdose deaths; and, be it

11 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors requests the Department of
12 Public Health to present a comprehensive plan on how to address this public health crisis
13 including but not limited to: 1) improve street level crisis response to address people who are
14 using drugs, in psychosis, or overdosing; 2) provide regular reporting of overdoses and
15 overdose deaths; 3) additional support for front line emergency responders and public safety
16 personnel; 4) identify existing models of detox and drop-in centers and how to best expand
17 those services; 5) stopping the flow of deadly drugs into San Francisco, and

18 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Mayor of San
19 Francisco to join the Board of Supervisors in declaring a public health crisis; and

20 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Governor and the
21 State of California to take emergency actions to respond to this crisis; and, be it

22 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Mayor and our state
23 representatives to prioritize moving forward policies that strongly support reducing the amount
24 of overdose deaths in San Francisco.